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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **LOCAL AUTHOR HONORED FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT**

**Washington, DC** -- Kathy Beland, lead author of *School-Connect: Optimizing the High School Experience* and original author of the award-winning *Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum*, received the nationally recognized Sanford N. McDonnell Award for Lifetime Achievement in Character Education from the Character Education Partnership (CEP) on October 29 at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center.

Beland's work in the field of prevention education spans Emmy Award-winning educational videos on the prevention of child abuse and youth violence to K-12 curricula on social emotional learning. *Second Step*, which teaches skills in empathy, impulse control, and anger management, is used in over 25,000 classrooms in the U.S., Canada, and 26 other countries. *Second Step* was recognized with an "Exemplary" award from the U.S. Department of Education, surpassing all others in its class, and as a Model Program by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA).

Beland, along with co-author Julea Douglass, founded School Connect LLC in Bethesda, Md, in 2003. The School-Connect curriculum, designed to ease students' transition to high school and create a supportive learning environment, is implemented in 45 states and the District of Columbia.

CEP's Executive Director Joe Mazzola said, "Kathy is one of the true unsung heroes of character education." Beland led the early development of CEP's National Schools of Character recognition program and was lead writer on their *Eleven Principles Sourcebook: How to Achieve Quality Character Education in K-12 Schools*.

"This award is such a well-deserved recognition for the important work Kathy has been doing for more than 20 years," said Joan Cole Duffell, executive director of Committee for Children, which distributes and continues to develop the *Second Step* program. "Kathy's work as a teacher, curriculum developer, writer, and lecturer has always focused on helping young people build the skills to be better students, classmates, family members, and citizens of the world."

**About CEP and the Award:** Based in the District of Columbia, CEP is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonsectarian coalition of US organizations and individuals dedicated to helping schools develop people of good character for a just and compassionate society. The Sanford N. McDonnell Award is named for McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft's chairman emeritus and is the CEP's highest honor in recognition of an individual's outstanding lifetime achievement in character education. [www.character.org](http://www.character.org)

**About School-Connect and the *School-Connect* program:** School-Connect is a Bethesda-based company that develops curricula and training for boosting social, emotional, and academic skills in adolescents. [www.school-connect.net](http://www.school-connect.net)

**About Committee for Children and the *Second Step* program:** *Second Step* is one of four educational programs developed by Committee for Children, a Seattle-based international nonprofit.  
[www.cfchildren.org](http://www.cfchildren.org)

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